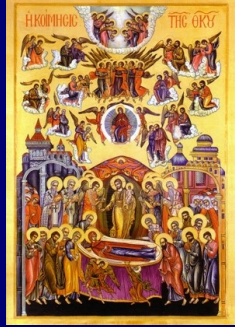


CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Jim (Demetrios) Katsitis
- Philoptochos President: Eleni Giakoumopoulos
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba & Peli Galiti
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

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The Message

OCTOBER 2020

TURNING OUR BACK ON GOD

There is a story about an old farmer whose mule fell into a well. After many unsuccessful attempts to haul the mule out of the well, the farmer decided it was hopeless. So with a great deal of sadness he instructed his boys to fill up several truckloads of dirt and just bury the old mule there in the well. Well, the boys backed up the truck filled with dirt, shoveled in the dirt, and began to fill the well to bury the mule. The mule didn't appreciate it, though. The first shovel of dirt hit him squarely on the head, got in his eyes and mouth, and made him sneeze. Every shovelful after that hit him somewhere, causing the old mule to stomp around in the bottom of the well.

Several truckloads of dirt later the mule was still stomping and packing the dirt firmly under his feet. Little by little that mule was lifting himself out of that well. Sure enough, about mid-afternoon, that mule simply stepped out of the well and snorted at the whole business.

Have you ever noticed that this is the way some people deal with their problems? Some complain; some do not handle setbacks well; some are defeated with the slightest difficulty. There are others who, like the mule when problems hit them squarely on the head, stomp around enough until finally they use the problem to rise above it. Saint Paul tells the Romans (8:28): We know that in everything God works for the good with those who love him."

Now we all need to ask ourselves are we like the mule, or like the farmer? Are we going to try for a little bit and then just give up, or are we going keep trying until we work through our problems? Through out are lives we are going to be confronted with many obstacles thrown at us by the devil, it is these obstacles that will strengthen our faith. We must not turn our back to God, but rather stay vigilant in our faith.

We have so many examples of this in our Churches history, looking at this month what better example is there then the life of Saint Demetrios. He lived his faith, even though it would mean not only the end of his extremely promising military career, but would ultimately result in Death. Saint Demetrios was just like the mule, and in the end resulted in with him becoming a great saint and martyr of the church.

Finally, Saint Paul tells the Philippians (4:11-13): Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.

During this wonderful month of October, let us strive to acquire this virtue of problem solving. To use our gifts and talents to overcome the roadblocks and difficulties that life casts in our path. Let us become like the mule and rise above those attitudes, mindsets, persons or circumstances that seek to engulf us.

October 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Strict Fast	3
4 Second Sunday of Luke 8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School	5	6	7 Strict Fast 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	8	9 Strict Fast	10 +Sacrament
11 Sunday of the Seventh Ecumenical Council 8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School	12	13	14 Strict Fast 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	15	16 Strict Fast	17
18 Saint Luke the Evangelist 8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School +Sacrament	19	20 Saint Artemios the Great Martyr & Saint Geresimos of Keph- lonia 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy	21 Strict Fast 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	22	23 Strict Fast Saint Iakovos, Brother of our Lord 8:00 a.m. Orthros Followed by Divine Liturgy	24
25 Sixth Sunday of Luke 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School	26 Great Martyr Deme- trios the Myrrh- Streaming 9:00 p.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy	27	28 Strict Fast 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	29	30 Strict Fast	31

The Parish Council Update

October 2020

Officers: Jim Katsihtis, President; Maria Molzahn, Vice President; Bruce Hansen, Secretary; Niko Papadopoulos, Treasurer; Scott Storck, Assistant Treasurer

Members: John Bayouth, Christy Chappell-Belkin, Conn Choles, Maria Schirmer-Devitt, Dori Hosek, Carol Griskavich, Mike Smith

Warm greetings, and our love and prayers for you all.

Clergy-Laity

The Clergy-Laity Congress took place on September 9th and 10th. It was attended virtually by Fr. Christodoulos and Jim. Father and Jim will be presenting a summary to the Parish Council at its next meeting, and sharing relevant updates with the entire parish soon after that.

General Assembly & Elections

We are looking to hold our Fall General Assembly via videoconference this year. We are also evaluating safe options for holding our Parish Council elections. Schedules and further information will be sent as soon they become available. If anyone is interested in nominating someone or running for Parish Council, please contact Fr. Christodoulos or Jim for more information. We encourage your participation and always welcome your help.

Matching Funds Drive

Our community has once again stepped up and greatly supported the Matching Funds Drive. We're pleased to report that we are over 90% toward reaching our goal. Thank you to all who have contributed. The drive ends on October 15th. Let's strive to not only meet our goal, but surpass it in the time we have remaining.

Safety

Thank you for your continued support of the safety precautions and guidelines we've implemented for worshipping together, including social distancing and wearing masks. We appreciate the love for your neighbor that you show by following them. Let's try to keep in my mind how much Christ lowered himself out of love for us, and that we are all one in Him who is love.

Please continue to pray for and support our parish. And please let us know how we can serve you better. It's of course been a challenging year on so many levels. We hope you can find some blessings that came out of it, and pray that we are all growing closer to the Holy Trinity through it.

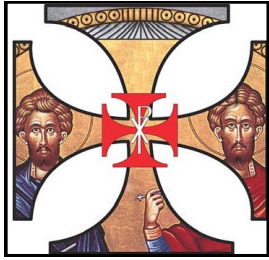
The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday October 6th.

On behalf of the Parish Council,

Jim

407-408-3096

jkatsihtis@gmail.com



FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS

**President, Eleni Giakoumopoulos, lenagiak@gmail.com
608-556-8186**

**Vice President: Maria Molzahn, Secretary: Sue Soloninka, Treasurer: Maria Heide,
Asst. Treasurer: Jenny Glatch, Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Briamis, Asst. Corresponding Secretary: Kathie Fafalios**

We continue to be #PhiloStrong because of the support of this amazing community!!

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES:

CHAPTER MEETING:

The next Chapter meeting will be conducted virtually on October 22, 2020 at 5:30 pm. Look for meeting and login information in October. Contact Lena G (lenagiak@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

PHILOPTOCHOS VIRTUAL BAKE SALE – NOVEMBER 21-22, 2020:

We are excited to offer this opportunity to our AGOC family and the greater community again in November for our chapter's fall fundraiser: Baklava Plus Sale.

We need volunteers to help with our major fundraiser. Given that this year we are following a new course of action, please contact Lena Giakoumopoulos at lenagiak@gmail.com or Sue Soloninka at solofam5@yahoo.com if you are interested in volunteering. Some of the areas will need assistance with:

- Taking orders online
- Packaging orders
- Delivery of orders to patrons/vehicles on the pick up days: November 21 and 22
- Clean up

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Virtual 5K Challenge for IOCC – October 10

Madison Area Virtual Crop Hunger Walk – October 18-25 - Anyone interested, contact Patti Cameron at pcameron10@gmail.com.

METROPOLIS:

Saint Iakovos Retreat Center Fundraiser: DRIVE-IN MOVIE NIGHT, October 10, 2020 @ 6:30 pm, 920 224th Avenue, Kansasville, WI

MASKS MATTER:

The chapter has become involved in the Metropolis humanitarian initiative Masks Matter. The goal for the Metropolis is to sew and distribute 10,000 masks by December 31 to non- first responders (ie. caregivers, other hospital workers, grocery store clerks, and parishioners). If anyone is interested in becoming involved, you may contact Nancy Briamis (nbriamis@gmail.com).

Goodman Community Center

The Goodman Center is ready to step up, providing small learning hubs to assist with virtual school and full-day care for more than 200 kids in our community. But we need your help. Here's what we're doing:

- Day-long care for preschool through fifth grade, including virtual learning assistance.
- Scholarships and tuition assistance for 85% of our preschool and elementary families.
- Full-day, FREE virtual learning assistance and clubs for middle school students.
- Employment opportunities for 16 high school students.
- Drop-in computer lab, as well as tutoring and after-school programming, for high school students.
- In-house Economic Support Specialist to help families navigate funding assistance programs.
- Partnership with Anesis Center for Family Therapy to provide sessions with therapists to preschool, middle school and high school.
- Dedicated conscious discipline practice in elementary classrooms.
- Breakfast, lunch and snacks provided to all program participants.
- Dinner and grocery delivery to east-side neighbors

You can contact them at (608) 241-1574, info@goodmancenter.org or goodmancenter.org.

River Food Pantry - Nancy Briamis, nbriamis@gmail.com

The River Food Pantry is implementing additional programs to improve access to food during this pandemic. The River needs volunteers to expand both of these programs.

1. Expansion of their MUNCH (bagged lunches for kids) program from once a day to twice a day Monday through Friday: 10:45am - 1:15pm and 2:15pm - 4:15pm and Saturday: 10:30pm - 2:15pm.
2. Expand the delivery of meals and groceries beyond a few current clients to the general public for people in need. They need volunteers to pick up groceries at the pantry and deliver them to clients. Grocery pick-up will be between 10:00am and 2:00pm with grocery delivery by 5:00pm.

Please contact The River Food Pantry at (608) 442-8815 or riverfoodpantry.org if you can help.

Sunday School

Co-Directors: Seham Akkawi, sususaba@yahoo.com,

Peli Galiti, Co-pegaliti@gmail.com,

Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Christodoulos, frchristos@gmail.com

As many of you know the Sunday School has begun Virtually in September. We want to make this experience good for all our Students and their parents. So if you have not registered your children yet there is still time just let Fr. Christodoulos know. Our goal is all children get an opportunity to continue learning about their faith during this period of Covid.

Here is the link for the survey and registration. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RH3NVX3>

You can find us on facebook: www.facebook.com/agocwi.SpiritualLearningCntr/ and our temporary webpage: <https://sites.google.com/site/assumptiongocsundayschool/home>

GREEK SCHOOL

Elektra Kolokouri, ilektra.kol@gmail.com

Greek school have begun holding their classes on Saturday's. There is still time to registered. Just email Ilektra if your are interested.

If you need information about Greek school please e-mail me or talk to me at church.

CHURCH WEBSITE

Lainey Skoumbouris, laney0220@yahoo.com

The church website is set-up for private login to access the monthly newsletters and are meant for Church members only, not the public. Church members can read the newsletter on the website, but you must create an account before you can view it. Log onto the website and click on "Newsletter" on the side-bar <http://www.agocwi.org/registration-required/>, or "login" on the main menu <http://www.agocwi.org/login/>; it will direct you to sign up. If you need help, have questions or something isn't working in the registration contact me.

Assumption Cookbook Project

We are starting to collect recipes for our AGOC cookbook. Please submit your recipe using this online form: <https://forms.gle/jdEM9USt1nSXjGGR8>. We are excited to create a memorable book to preserve our stories through food! If you are interested in being part of the cookbook committee please email Maria Schirmer Devitt at schirmerdevitt@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

J and M Home Helpers


AGOC's handymen, John and Mike, will do minor home repairs and maintenance for \$25/hour, with the money for their work being donated to the church.



Call Mike at (608) 516-9188 and John at (608) 575-1014 today!

THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO FAMILY SYNAXIS PRESENTS

PARENTING UNIVERSITY




A way to connect with Orthodox parents and hone your skills for the most important job of your life!

FRIDAY Oct. 16, 2020
New! Attend this event online!
Featuring:

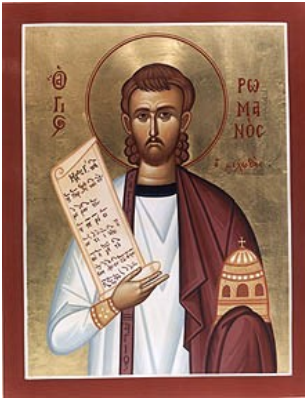
THE PLAN 2020
7:00 - ZOOM presentation and Q&A

**Meeting Today's Challenges:
How to THRIVE,
not just survive**
with Randa Anderson, Ph.D., LCP



*** Find the link to register at www.gocfamilysynaxis.org or on our Facebook page**

"...My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27)



Saint Romanos the Melodist: Saint Romanos the Melodist was born in the fifth century in the Syrian city of Emesa of Jewish parents. After moving to Constantinople, he became a church sacristan in the temple of Hagia Sophia. The monk spent his nights alone at prayer in a field or in the Blachernae church beyond the city.

Saint Romanos was not a talented reader or singer. Once, on the eve of the Nativity of Christ, he read the kathisma verses. He read so poorly that another reader had to take his place. The clergy ridiculed Romanos, which devastated him.

On the day of the Nativity, the Mother of God appeared to the grief-stricken youth in a vision while he was praying before her Kyriotissa icon. She gave him a scroll and commanded him to eat it. Thus was he given the gift of understanding, composition, and hymnography.

That evening at the all-night Vigil Saint Romanos sang, in a wondrous voice, his first Kontakion: “Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One...” All the hymns of Saint Romanos became known as kontakia, in reference to the Virgin’s scroll. Saint Romanos was also the first to write in the form of the Oikos, which he incorporated into the all-night Vigil at his places of residence (In Greek, “oikos”).

For his zealous service Saint Romanos was ordained as a deacon and became a teacher of song. Until his death, which occurred about the year 556, the hierodeacon Romanos the Melodist composed nearly a thousand hymns, many of which are still used by Christians to glorify the Lord.



Venerable John Koukouzelis the Hymnographer of Mt. Athos: Saint John Koukouzelis, a native of Dirrachia (Bulgaria), was orphaned in childhood. Endowed with a very fine voice, he entered the Constantinople court school. He found favor with the emperor John Comnenos (1118-1143) and became a chief court singer. The sumptuousness and luxury of the imperial court bothered the pious youth. Once, when asked what he had eaten for dinner, he replied, “Beans and peas.” The name Koukouzelis (beans and peas) stuck with him ever after.

John began to seek ways to escape the enticements of the court, as well as a marriage arranged for him by the emperor. By the will of God, John met an abbot from Mt. Athos who had come to Constantinople on monastery business. John revealed to the abbot his desire to leave the court. The abbot blessed John to come to the Holy Mountain. There John was accepted and tonsured a monk.

He was given the obedience of tending the monastery’s flock of goats. He took the flock to remote areas of the Holy Mountain to graze. There in the wilderness the youth was able to pray, contemplate God, and sing the divine hymns in solitude. Charmed by the angelic beauty of his voice, the animals gathered around him and listened as though entranced.

Out of modesty and humility the singer did not reveal his gift to the brethren. But once, a wilderness dweller overheard his moving pastoral song and informed the abbot. Saint John then revealed to the abbot that he had been a court singer. He tearfully implored him to remain in the wilderness with his flock.

The abbot was afraid that the emperor would find out that his favorite court singer was on the Holy Mountain and force him to return to court. Wishing to avoid the emperor’s displeasure the abbot journeyed to Constantinople to explain what had become of John and begged him not to hinder the young man from his salvific path.

Thereafter John Koukouzelis sang on the right chanting stand in the cathedral on Sundays and feast days. Once, after singing an Akathist before an icon of the Mother of God, John was granted a great mercy. The

Mother of God appeared to him in a dream and said, “Rejoice, John, and do not cease to sing. For that, I shall not forsake you.” With these words she placed into John’s hand a golden coin, then became invisible. This coin was placed beneath the icon. Many miracles have been credited to the coin and the icon. The icon, named the “Koukouzelissa” in memory of Saint John is located in the Lavra monastery of Saint Athanasius. It is commemorated on October 1st, and on the 10th Friday after Pascha.

The Mother of God appeared to Saint John again and healed him of a grievous affliction of his legs, caused by the long standing in church. Saint John’s remaining days were spent in intense ascetic efforts. He also worked hard on the discipline of church singing, gaining the title of both master teacher and regent (overseer).

He arranged and compiled melodies for church stichera verses, troparia and kontakia. He edited texts of hymns and wrote his own troparia. Some of his compositions are also in the following manuscripts: “A Book, by the Will of God Encompassing All the Order of Progression of Church Services, Compiled by Master Teacher John Koukouzelis,” “Progression of Services, Compiled by Master Teacher John Koukouzelis,” “From the Beginning of Great Vespers through to the Completion of the Divine Liturgy,” and “The Science of Song and Singing Signs with all the Legitimate Hand-Placement and with all the Arrangements of Song.”

Foreseeing the hour of his death, Saint John took his leave of the brethren, and in his last wishes bade them to bury him in the Church of the Archangel that he built. Church singers reverence Saint John Koukouzelis as their own special patron saint.



Virginmartyr Justina of Nicomedia: The holy Virgin Martyr Justina suffered for Christ in Nicomedia with the Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Martyr Theoctistus in 304. At first Saint Cyprian was a pagan sorcerer, and tried to corrupt Juliana through his magic spells. The holy virgin Justina lived in Antioch. After turning her own father and mother away from pagan error and leading them to the true faith in Christ, she dedicated herself to the Heavenly Bridegroom and spent her time in fasting and prayer. When the youth Aglaides proposed marriage to her, the saint refused, for she wished to remain a virgin. Aglaides sought Cyprian’s help and asked for a magic spell to charm Justina into marriage. But no matter what Cyprian tried, he could accomplish nothing, since the saint overcame all the wiles of the devil through her prayers and fasting.

Cyprian sent demons to attack the holy virgin, trying to arouse fleshly passions in her, but she dispelled them by the power of the Sign of the Cross and by fervent prayer to the Lord. Even though one of the demonic princes and Cyprian himself, assumed various guises by the power of sorcery, they were not able to sway Saint Justina, who was guarded by her firm faith in Christ. All the spells dissipated, and the demons fled at the mere mention of the saint’s name. Cyprian, in a rage, sent down pestilence and plague upon Justina’s family and upon all the city, but this was thwarted by her prayer. Cyprian’s soul, corrupted by its domination over people and by his incantations, was shown in all the depth of his downfall, and also the abyss of nothingness of the evil that he served.

Once he realized the powerlessness of the demons, Saint Cyprian rejected them and became a Christian. He was baptized, and after a time, he was consecrated as a bishop. The Hieromartyr Cyprian converted so many pagans to Christ that in his diocese there was no one left to offer sacrifice to idols, and the pagan temples fell into disuse. Saint Justina withdrew to a monastery and was chosen Abbess.

During the persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian, Bishop Cyprian and Abbess Justina were arrested and brought to Nicomedia, where after fierce tortures they were beheaded with the sword. Saint Cyprian, fearful that the holy virgin’s courage might falter if she saw him put to death, asked for time to pray. Saint Justina joyfully inclined her neck and was beheaded first. The soldier Theoctistus, seeing the guiltless sufferings of Saint Justina, fell at Cyprian’s feet and declared himself a Christian, and was beheaded with them.



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KIDS CORNER

Byzantine empire

K U A K Z V L R S S G U N N K Q Q Y I U X I C H
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MANOR

CZAR

POPE

ORTHODOX

BYZANTINE

MONK

CRUSADERS

JUSTINIAN

CONSTANTINOPLE

JUSTINIAN CODE

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

111 N 7th Street

Madison, WI 53704-4904

Phone: 608-244-1001 Fax: 608-244-1565

Email: office@agocwi.org



2020 Matching Funds Drive Progress Report

Thank you to all the donors who have contributed to the Matching Funds Drive!

We have received **\$20,425** to date, which has been **matched by \$20,000** from a generous Parishioner!

The Matching Fund Drive **ends on October 15**. Please help us surpass our goal even further. Thank you!

Contributions to date:	\$20,425
Matching Funds to date:	<u>\$20,000</u>
Total Raised to date:	\$40,425
 Goal:	 \$40,000



101% of Goal